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## A PROPOSED DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The following proposals have been presented to the Cincinnati Branch by its chairman, L. T. More. The branch, without passing on their substance has recommended their publication in the **BULLETIN** as a basis for study and discussion on the part of members of the Association with a view to preliminary action or consideration at the approaching annual meeting.

### PROPOSED DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS.

1. The justification for such an Association is that its members can foster and improve the scholarly life.

The word "scholarly" is used in its broadest sense. It means not only that the members shall have knowledge in their specialties and devotion to them, but also that they shall by teaching and writing promote wisdom and justice.

2. Upholding and raising the standards of colleges:

(a) The Association must insist that private and public preparatory schools shall give a simple disciplinary course of study designed for college entrance, and in conformity to the needs of college education. At the present time the National Education Association has declared that, if educational systems are modified, the college must conform to the schools, since the latter have the broader and more important function in education. Whether this principle in its general aspect be wise or not, it is self-evident that courses should be offered in preparatory schools which will prepare pupils for their future work in colleges. The solution of this problem is simple enough if each college faculty, encouraged by its Local Branch, will state clearly its entrance requirements and its minimum of preparation in each study, and will then *stick to these requirements*. It is probable that for a few years enrollment will be reduced and the Association will be criticized severely; but if each college will explain to parents, and will publish in the press, the reasons for the many failures to enter college, the burden of dissatisfaction will soon fall on the school authorities and this supercilious attitude will change.

(b) It is more difficult to state the means of improving standards in the colleges themselves. It would certainly help much if faculties required a pretty thorough survey of a few fundamental subjects for the first two years and then should allow

freedom of choice for the last two years. Of course, the decision as to which are the fundamental subjects must be left to the individual colleges. In a general way, these subjects would be those which have been studied longest and out of which the others have developed. A vote of the Association on this question would aid the colleges in making their choice. At any rate the Association should set itself whole-heartedly against the license of elective systems on the one hand and narrow specialization on the other.

3. The substitution of a standard of quality in education in place of our present standard of quantity.

In spite of certain requirements in some subjects selected from balanced groups, we are tacitly, but actually, giving students the idea that education consists in obtaining a specified number of credits. A credit is the thing, and students watch additions to their credits much more than their attainment of knowledge. This being the students' main pursuit, they regard as a minor matter what they take or whether there is continuity in their education. If the required number of credits can be captured in three years, by cramming and by a judicious choice of "snaps," instead of in four, then a year of life has been saved; and, with our present plan, this idea may have some justification. This standard of quantity runs all through our college administration, and it is thoroughly vicious. The success of a college is gauged by the number of credits, by the number of students, by the number of departments and courses, and by the number of dollars. Would it not be wise, in the case of students who can profit by it, to require a disciplinary course for the first two years, and in the last two years to base qualifications for graduation on satisfactory attainments in a small group of allied subjects, rather than on any specified number of credits?

4. The reduction of the machinery of educational systems:

We are so rapidly building up a complex system of machinery, wheels within wheels, which we call university administration, that the time and strength of valuable men are absorbed in endless committee work and interminable paper correcting, to the utter demoralization of their scholarly work. This machinery brings into prominence the unscholarly and the weak members of the Faculty who salve their consciences and keep themselves busy in this so-called executive work, so dear to the average college president. Most of this machinery is made necessary by the nature of our standards of quantity. Committee work is necessary, for the most part, to establish and guard curricula; to decide the endless questions of the relations of student to these curricula; and to bolster up stupid and lazy youths with private instruction; those who are kept in college because it desires large numbers.

5. The avoidance of expansion and standardization:

Faculties, instead of trying to run all colleges and universities into a uniform mould, should preserve the individuality of each. It is a useful thing for students to know the character and the aim of the college to which they go. There are only a few institutions so strong in finances and in their faculties that they can offer instruction in the whole body of knowledge. Members of this Association should oppose undue expansion of their own departments as well as in the institutions. Practically all of our colleges and universities are on the brink of bankruptcy; that is, they are expanded to such an extent that they have no reserves to meet any emergency or stringency; they have not enough money to pay decent salaries or to provide proper equipment for instruction. This condition prevents wise administration, promotes irritability and suspicion, and fosters weak faculties, since able men are repelled from entering the profession.

6. The increase of salaries:

This is the imperative need of the day, and its accomplishment should be the chief purpose of the Association. It should include a substantial increase in the average salaries paid and also large compensation to men of distinguished achievement. Better salaries are necessary, not only to meet the increased cost of living, but also because it is becoming a more and more serious matter that young men of ability will not enter our profession. Their declared reason is that, while the work is attractive, the pay is quite inadequate to a proper standard of life. The result is that the number of competent instructors is steadily decreasing in our faculties.

In most cases, the finances of our institutions would be adequate to increase salaries if executives would put a stop to their expansion of unimportant departments and schools, and if heads of departments would be satisfied without increasing the number of unimportant courses and unnecessary instructors. The financial embarrassment of colleges is thus largely the result of our standard of quantity and of cumbrous and wasteful administrative machinery. The concerted action of the Association would have great influence in accomplishing a reform.

7. Less emphasis on "Lehrfreiheit":

One of the important functions of the Association is to preserve academic freedom and tenure of office. The stand can be taken that any dismissal without the opportunity of a public defense should be regarded as suspicious and should be investigated. But it should not be overlooked that, as a general rule, tenure of office is secure enough and what academic men most need is more freedom and more incentive to do the

higher work of their profession. An undue prominence given to "Lehrfreiheit" is attended with the danger that grossly incompetent men will seek membership to make their position secure. It is possible that colleges suffer more from the presence of these grossly incompetent than they do from the dismissal of the able.

8. The interpretation and the carrying out of these principles shall be left absolutely to the membership of the Association and its Local Branches. But the Association will expect each Branch to send the Council an annual report showing what has been accomplished to further the purpose of the Association.

LOUIS T. MORE, *Chairman.*